



EM Recovery NEWS FLASH

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Recovery Act-Funded Study Assesses Contamination at Former Test Site in California

CANOGA PARK, Calif. – Workers in a study funded by \$38 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to assess radiological contamination have collected more than 600 soil samples and surveyed 120 acres of land for gamma radiation.

Under an interagency agreement with DOE, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is conducting the study at Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) Area IV and the Northern Undeveloped Land. DOE's Energy Technology Engineering Center (ETEC) is located in Area IV. Results of the study will guide cleanup decisions for this portion of SSFL, which was once used for a broad range of energy related research and development.

The EPA is collecting soil samples to determine the nature and extent of radiological contamination. Additional samples are being analyzed by DOE for possible chemical contaminants in coordination with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control.

Data analysis will be performed to compare results of the EPA study with those of soil background studies. The background studies provide a baseline to determine the extent SSFL soils exceed background levels of chemicals and radionuclides.

The first of two rounds of groundwater sampling have been completed, and laboratory results are pending. Surface water testing will occur during rainfall.

EM Recovery Act Program Director Thomas Johnson, Jr., who attended the opening ceremony for the SSFL EPA Field Office in 2010, said he's pleased with progress in the Recovery Act-funded study.

"We will achieve another Recovery Act accomplishment at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory. We will complete this study in a coordinated, collaborative approach with other government entities and produce important, detailed findings that will lead to the effective and safe cleanup of radiological and chemical contamination from the Cold War legacy," Johnson said.

DOE closed remaining operations at ETEC in 1988, and the focus turned to cleanup and demolition of facilities, soil and groundwater remediation, and site restoration.

SSFL is located on 2,850 acres of land in the hills between Chatsworth and Simi Valley. The former testing site was developed by DOE's predecessor agency, the Atomic Energy Commission.



Workers conduct Gamma Scanning (bottom right photos) and collect soil samples for the EPA study (top right photo).

